



Natural Disaster Education and Outreach Act

Introduced By: Senators Peter Welch (D-Vt.); Reverend Raphael Warnock (D-Ga.)

Background:

In recent years, extreme weather events—from floods and hurricanes to droughts and wildfires—have inflicted a heavy toll on communities across the country. In 2023, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reported that the U.S. experienced [28 disasters causing more than \\$1 billion in damage](#), a historic high. In total, the price tag of recovering from these disasters is estimated to be at least \$92.9 billion.

Extreme weather events are only projected to increase in frequency and severity as the effects of climate change worsen. Understanding the unique risks posed by extreme weather and a changing climate is essential as communities seek to adapt and respond to ongoing disasters. While federal agencies such as NOAA collect troves of valuable scientific data and weather observations, that information is not always disseminated to State and local governments, leaving them unaware, unprepared, and at risk of greater damage from extreme weather.

Legislation:

The *Natural Disaster Education and Outreach Act* would direct NOAA to establish a program that would communicate patterns in changing weather to the public. This program's mission would focus on providing communities and local governments with cutting-edge services to assist with crucial decisions about resource allocation and emergency preparedness before a disaster occurs.

Additionally, the *Natural Disaster Education and Outreach Act* would establish a working group within NOAA to identify the most effective ways to educate the public about shifting weather patterns, including through public education campaigns and resources, and outreach to decision-makers in local communities who respond to extreme weather events.